

have clearly demonstrated their ability to coexist. It is time for political leaders to bring their policies in line with the actions of their people. As part of that process, Turkey should begin the withdrawal of troops from Cyprus. The presence of these forces is neither justified nor necessary and complicates efforts to return the island to a state of lasting peace.

Mr. President, as I have said before, the reunification of Cyprus will have significance far beyond the Mediterranean. The island could serve as an example of how different ethnic groups can overcome past wrongs, bridge differences, and live together as neighbors. I am confident that future generations of Cypriots can serve as such a model and, in doing so, enjoy the peace that they rightly deserve. I hope that their political leaders will move quickly to afford them that opportunity.

#### NATIONAL DAY OF THE AMERICAN COWBOY

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I rise to remember my dear friend and colleague, Senator Craig Thomas. Craig was a champion for Wyoming, the West, and its values. Every year, for the last several years, Craig championed a resolution honoring the American cowboy. A true cowboy in his own right, Craig sought to honor those who serve as stewards of the land, embody the courageous and daring spirit of the West, and uphold the values of freedom and responsibility that we all cherish.

I was proud to support my friend in this endeavor over the years to honor these great individuals, and today, I am pleased the President has also stated his support for the National Day of the American Cowboy. As cowboys, cowgirls, family, and friends gather on July 28, 2007, to celebrate at Cheyenne Frontier Days and nationwide, I extend my best wishes to all.

#### FDA LEGISLATION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I am here today to speak about S. 1082, the Food and Drug Administration Revitalization Act, and H.R. 2900, the Food and Drug Administration Amendments Act of 2007.

The Senate passed S. 1082 in May and the House passed H.R. 2900 earlier this month. As the House and Senate go into conference and work to resolve differences between these two bills, I urge my colleagues to keep in mind the public's interest.

Both bills contain provisions that attempt to address some of the problems that have been plaguing the FDA over the past 3 years. Some of these issues are better addressed by the Senate bill and others by the House bill.

I am going to spend the next few minutes to comment on what the bills don't do and point out some of the provisions that I believe are important to improving drug safety at the FDA that will benefit all Americans.

Two months ago, I offered amendment No. 1039 to S. 1082, because I believed—and still believe—that S. 1082 does not address a fundamental problem at the Food and Drug Administration—the lack of equality between the preapproval and postapproval offices of the agency, the Office of New Drugs and the Office of Surveillance and Epidemiology, respectively. The Office of New Drugs approves drugs for the market, while the Office of Surveillance and Epidemiology monitors and assesses the safety of the drugs once they are on the market.

My amendment was intended to curb delays in FDA actions when it comes to safety.

The Institute of Medicine recognized the imbalance between the Office of New Drugs and the Office of Surveillance and Epidemiology and recommended joint authority between these two offices for postapproval regulatory actions related to safety. My amendment did just that.

While I believe an independent postmarketing safety center is still the best solution to the problem, joint postmarketing decisionmaking between the Office of Surveillance and Epidemiology and the Office of New Drugs at least would allow the office with the postmarketing safety expertise to have a say in what drug safety actions the FDA would take.

Unfortunately, this amendment lost by one vote. But the fact that it lost by such a narrow margin demonstrates that many of my Senate colleagues also recognize the seriousness of this problem and believe action by Congress is necessary.

I have seen time and time again in my investigations that serious safety problems that emerge after a drug is on the market do not necessarily get prompt attention from the Office of New Drugs, the office that approves drugs to go on the market in the first place. We saw this with Vioxx and more recently with the diabetes drug Avandia.

FDA has disregarded and downplayed important concerns and warnings from its own best scientists. We saw evidence of that in the way FDA treated Dr. Andrew Mosholder's findings on antidepressants and Dr. David Graham's findings on Vioxx. The FDA even attempted to undermine the publication of Dr. Graham's findings in the journal *Lancet*.

My current review of FDA's handling of Avandia has unearthed concerns similar to those we have seen in the past—a situation where FDA ignored its own postmarketing safety experts and once again left the public in the dark regarding potential, serious health risks.

Not only did the FDA disregard the concerns and recommendations from the office responsible for postmarketing surveillance, but I have found that it also attempted to suppress scientific dissent.

As I have said many times before, FDA employees dedicated to post-

marketing drug safety should be able to express their opinions in writing and independently without fear of retaliation, reprimand, or reprisal. But in the past 2 months, I have had to write to the FDA regarding the suppression of dissent from not one but two FDA officials involved in the review of Avandia.

Last month, I expressed concerns about FDA's treatment of the former Deputy Director of the Division of Drug Risk Evaluation. I urged the Commissioner to take appropriate corrective actions. That deputy director had been verbally reprimanded because she signed off on a recommendation that a black box warning be placed on Avandia for congestive heart failure.

This week, I wrote to the Commissioner about a senior medical officer in the Office of New Drugs who was removed from the review of potential cardiovascular safety problems associated with Avandia. This medical officer also believed that there was enough evidence to support a black box warning on Avandia regarding congestive heart failure. But I guess that FDA management just did not want to hear about drug safety problems—again.

Of the two bills up for discussion, neither the Senate nor the House version will give postmarketing surveillance the equal footing it deserves with drug approval. But I appreciate the attempt by my colleagues in the House to provide some transparency in FDA's postmarketing drug safety system. Transparency is the key to accountability. In particular, I welcome the provision in H.R. 2900 that would require FDA to report to Congress on drug safety recommendations received in consultation with, as well as the reports from, the Office of Surveillance and Epidemiology. If FDA does not act on a recommendation from the Office of Surveillance and Epidemiology or it takes a different action, the agency would be required to provide its justification to Congress.

In its report released last fall, the Institute of Medicine called for specific safety-related performance goals in the Prescription Drug User Fee Act, PDUFA, of 2007 to restore balance between speeding access to drugs and ensuring their safety.

I have heard from FDA employees that because of the PDUFA deadlines, the staff in the Office of New Drugs is under tremendous time pressure to approve new drugs quickly, so safety concerns often needed to be “fit in” wherever they could. This reinforces a point I have frequently made in the past—the Office of New Drugs doesn't give postmarketing drug safety the attention or priority it deserves.

The House bill attempts to address this, in part, by requiring that postmarketing safety performance measures be developed that are “as measurable and rigorous as the ones already developed for premarket review.”

S. 1082 requires that the Secretary assess and implement the risk evaluation and management strategies in